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3

Charity in a Web of Politics

(Continued from page 1)

Reagan and the three living ex-presidents. More recently, Macauley's zeal and commitment to helping the impoverished helped get him named a Local Hero by *New England Monthly* magazine. But when charity meets international politics, things can get complicated. Americans' attitudes over the past four years have made it some unusual friends that give the group a distinct conservative tinge. This is particularly apparent

Right's Who's Who

Americares' board reads like a guide to American conservative power and influence. The honorary chairman of the group is Zbigniew Brzezinski, the hard-line national security adviser to President Carter. Members of the advisory committee include arch-conservative and former Nixon Treasury Secretary William Simon (also a director of the Heritage Foundation), Prescott Bush (brother of Vice President George Bush, a prep school and college friend of Macauley's), and retired General Richard Stilwell.

The chairman of the advisory committee is J. Peter Grace, chairman of W.R. Grace and Company, who chaired Ronald Reagan's advisory Grace Commission. Grace got himself into trouble early in the Reagan years with racist statements about

"MY FEELING IS THAT NONE OF THE AID GOES TO THE CONTRA FORCES, BUT I COULDN'T SAY THAT ABSOLUTELY NONE OF IT DOES."

- AMERICARES' CHIEF BOB MACAULEY

ent in Central America, where Americares has been charged with providing material aid to the anti-Sandinista *contras*. Americares' friends in Central America reportedly include the Rev. Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church, the far-right Catholic organization Knights of Malta (see sidebar), The Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN) and the armed forces in Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador. (Americares aid to the latter three countries has totaled \$18 million since 1983, with at least \$3 million of it going to Nicaraguan refugees in Honduras.)

Americares has been accused of allowing its Central American aid to be diverted by partisan groups fighting left-wing insurgents in Guatemala and El Salvador, and the Sandinista government in Managua.

AMERICARES' CONNECTIONS

The Rev. Sun Myung Moon
An arm of his right-wing Unification Church gave Americares \$350,000 for its Central American efforts.

Zbigniew Brzezinski
Head-line foreign affairs advisor to Jimmy Carter, he is honorary chair of Americares.

J. Peter Grace
Knight of Malta and chair of Americares' advisory committee, he is one of the best connected figures in corporate America and chaired President Reagan's Grace Commission on federal cost cutting.

coup in Chile), CIA "super spook" James Angleton (alleged to have run what amounted to a CIA "Vatican desk"), former Secretary of State Alexander Haig, William Simon, former Congresswoman and Ambassador to Italy Clare Booth Luce (a "Dame" of Malta), and both William and James Buckley.

There are many cross-connections between Americares board members, the Knights of Malta, Moon's Unification Church, and the contra support groups, Knight and Americares chairman J. Peter Grace is also a contributor to the Nicaraguan Refugee Fund, an arm of the contra group FDN. In April, according to the *New York Times*, the Nicaraguan Freedom Fund (an arm of the Unification Church's *Washington Times* set up to aid the *contras*) turned over \$350,000 in cash to Americares for its Central American efforts. The honorary chair of the fund is Knight of Malta and Americares editor William Simon. A \$1,000 contributor to the fund was Dame of Malta Clare Booth Luce. Other contributors include former UN envoy Jeanne Kirkpatrick (\$20,000), also a fund board member, and *The Washington Times* itself (\$100,000).

In addition to its efforts through the Nicaraguan Freedom Fund, the Moon Church is also active in Central America through its "political arm," CAUSA, which conducts anti-communist religious seminars and has distributed \$1 million in aid to refugees in Honduras. Church leaders are also active in the World Anti-Communist League (WACL).

Aid to Mikitos

The *Washington Post*, quoting a Knight of Malta official in Honduras, said that of \$680,000 in American aid to Honduras went directly to Nicaraguan Mikito Indians fighting the government in Managua. It went on to quote the official to the effect that "much of the \$300,000 in American aid to Guatemala had been distributed" through the armed forces as part of its resettlement program of "model villages" aimed at defeating leftist insurrections.... The Guatemalan Army delivers Americares medicine to people in model villages, along the Mexican border."

Both Americares and the Knights of Malta are working with the Christian Broadcasting Network in Central America, according to network Public Affairs Director Earl Weirich. Macauley says 10 percent of Americares funds come from CBN. The religious broadcaster has shipped some \$7 million in aid to the region, some of it on U.S. Navy ships, but it does not directly distribute it. As with Americans, much of the medical and other supplies is handled by the Knights of Malta. The broadcaster, which refuses to answer questions about its Central America work, has also been accused of directing money to the FDN-affiliated Nicaraguan Patriotic Association. Some \$4.5 million in CBN and World Medical Relief funds is said, by the group's director, to have gone to the Air Commando Association, a right-wing paramilitary group which does not deny it works with the *contras*. The head of the Air Commandos is retired general H.C. Aderholt, a contributing editor of *Soldier of Fortune* magazine; World Medical Relief is also a *Soldier of Fortune* creation.

The Knights of Malta head in El Salvador is former FBI agent Gerald Coughlan. Members of the *Soldier of Fortune*-connected Air Commando Association say they have free access to Knights

(Continued on page 10)

The Common Denominator

The common denominator in most of these right-wing programs is the Knights of Malta. The group's story is every bit as exotic as its name suggests. Although seemingly a private organization, it enjoys full diplomatic status recognized by 37 countries. Its Rome headquarters is treated as an embassy, and it sends out ambassadors and issues cases, clerical robes, and were smuggled on [the] "underground railroad" to South America. Among those was Klaus Barbie, 'the butcher of Lyons.' (Barbie is now in detention awaiting trial in France.)

In 1948, the Knight's Gran Croci al Merito con Placca, one of its highest awards, went to Reinhard Gehlen, Hitler's chief anti-Soviet spy, who later joined the CIA. Another CIA operative, James Angleton, was honored by the Knights in 1946 for his work with the wartime OSS.

The Knights also have connection with the Italian right-wing Catholic groups Opus Dei and the infamous P-2 Masonic lodge. According to David Valop's *In God's Name*, P-2 was founded by Licio Gelli in 1963 with the express aim of "extreme right-wing control of Italy." In this endeavor, Valop writes, Gelli "had the active support and encouragement of the CIA operating in Italy." One of Gelli's closest P-2 associates was Italian lawyer and businessman Umberto Ortolani, recipient of a "Gentleman of His Holiness" award from the Vatican and the official Knights ambassador to Uruguay. Ortolani was responsible for Gelli's induction into the Knights, although he is a non-Catholic.

Many former and current operatives of SISMI, the Italian intelligence agency, have been Knights. One former secret service head and Knight, Giovanni De Lorenzo, attempted a fascist coup in Italy in 1964.

The secret society Opus Dei, with more than 70,000 members in 87 countries, is also a creature of Italy's extreme right. According to former member and Oxford professor John Rocca in his *The Inner World of Opus Dei*, "Internally, it is totalitarian and imbued with fascist ideas turned to religious purposes." Like the Knights, its membership is vastly wealthy, giving the organization tentacles that reach deep into Italian and American financial institutions. (Continental Illinois, for instance, owns shares of an Opus Dei bank in Barcelona.) Opus Dei was active in working to overthrow Chilean President Salvador Allende, and an Opus Dei think tank in Chile received CIA funding.

Opus Dei's efforts have been endorsed by such prominent Knights as William Simon and Francis X. Starnard of Chase Manhattan Bank—both have spoken at Opus Dei seminars, according to *Mother Jones*.

J. 38